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MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: 1987 Secretary Speakout, 20-22 April 1987, Atlanta, Georgia; Theme: A Profession in Motion

1. The purpose of the Speakout was to gather colleagues to advance the secretarial profession by discussing relevant issues, which then culminated in a consensus of required action or appropriate strategies to achieve identified goals for the profession.

2. We were pre-assigned table seating for the duration of the Speakout. Facts and issues of concern to secretaries were presented by knowledgeable speakers followed by an open mike/table discussion. A facilitator was chosen to write our concerns and thoughts on how we would deal with the issues and our approach to help solving them. The following lists the topics covered and our views:

"The Future - In the Year 2020" Speaker: Paul A. Strassmann, Author - Perceptions/opinions from survey findings and how the secretary views the office. Also discussed was how the historic secretarial function as "keeper of secrets" will strongly reassert itself when voice-input typewriters, auto-filling software, and other technologies perform much of today's low-value work.

A survey of 2,000 secretaries was done prior to the Speakout asking secretaries their views on how things would be done in the year 2020. Those replying foresaw themselves as managers of information with desktop publishing responsibilities and strong interpersonal skills. They thought traditional secretarial duties would be performed by voice-activated computers.

They saw the office structure in the year 2020 in that seminar videoconferencing would be the most common method of training employees; every secretarial desk would have a personal computer or terminal; secretaries would staff space stations, dictation and transcription would be obsolete and secretaries would have terminals in homes.

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They felt computerized files will create a paperless office (we doubt that will happen here); teleconferencing and videoconferencing will replace face-to-face meetings; time on the Visual Display Terminal will be limited to four hours per day; and secretaries will work on terminals at home instead of office.

As an employee benefit, some thought the company should provide child-care services (there was discussion at the Speakout that some would be willing to pay a share for this benefit); the company would provide equal sharing of performance-based monies among secretaries and executives; and should provide executive perks for secretaries.

As to the status of the profession by 2020, three-fourths of those interviewed thought secretaries would be regarded as middle managers in 2020 and that secretarial salaries would more than double what they are today. Eighty-six percent were adamant that the role of the secretary would be more important in 2020 than today.

Our views: Some of this appeared far-fetched for the federal employee. The video- and teleconferencing appear logical; we don't see a paperless office. We heard that when they installed the Wangs; if anything, there's more. The child care center is located at Headquarters, but we're not familiar how that is set up, we're certainly ahead of time in establishing this; we're not sure we want to staff space stations, some of us have problems getting on the plane; and having secretaries working on computers at home seems feasible; we've only been back to work ten years, and our salary has already more than doubled.

Secretaries should be consulted when office equipment is selected since we are the primary users.

"Ethics" - Speaker: Gerald Cavanagh, SJ, Professor, School of Management, Boston College - Discussed the ethics of free enterprise--growth and decline in the U.S. Father Cavanagh also stressed to "make your values your own" and on being an individual.

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Our views: This portion dealt mainly with big business, although there are ethics in all organizations. Secretaries should not have to compromise their personal values in order to demonstrate loyalty to their companies; we are responsible for developing a personal value code.

"Image" Speaker: Vera J. Hilliard, Vera J. Hilliard Associates - A dynamic speaker. Ms. Hilliard gave tips and techniques that can help secretaries package themselves and their ideas more attractively to elicit the kind of attitudinal or behavioral changes/responses they are seeking. Also discussed was the great impact of the non-verbal image and how you should market yourselves; tap resources; take credit for things done; set expectations; visibility, and don't miss your opportunities.

Our views: She was such a dynamic speaker that we didn't want her to end. She did not get through her entire program because of time but everything she talked about rang true. She talked about staying in and getting out of the "comfort zone". We took a business card and have already sent it to Office of Training and Education. (Business cards were exchanged a lot, we could've used a few.)

"Occupational Health" - Speaker: Gordon Atherly, MD, - Focused on the office environment being a technological frontier where danger can arise from poor design of work stations and from insufficient or inadequate ventilation.

Our views: Overall, this man was BORING. We agree that we have insufficient/inadequate ventilation.

"Education, Training and Development" - Speaker: Ms. Susie VanHuss, PhD, Professor, College of Business Administration, University of South Carolina, Columbia Focused on understanding the subtle differences between education, training, and development being crucial to career development. Organizations typically exclude secretaries from development programs and include them in training programs, and secretaries frequently exclude themselves from education programs.

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Our views: This part of the program really hit home with us. Everyone attending was saying the same thing, "they want to be trained, educated and have the opportunity to grow and develop in their career". We felt very fortunate that the Agency can offer the training needed allowing for advancement in the new pay system.

"Secretarial Development" Speaker: Stephen McMillen, EdD, Program Director, Office Productivity Institute - Secretarial training is typically administered according to what the manager/executive believes the secretary needs. Mr. McMillen stressed the importance of training.

Our views: Another BORING speaker who did nothing but show slides (statistical) and read to us.

The morning of the 22nd was the finalizing/adoption of the consensus. There was a very lively open mike discussion on the final adoption which is attached.

Ending the program was an informal/impromptu participant remarks session relevant to the profession conducted by Ms. Frances R. Barr, Professional Secretaries International (PSI), President-Elect, and Ms. Carol M. Spencer, President of National Association of Educational Office Personnel. This was open mike with participants' views on the Speakout.

3. Several interesting facts presented themselves which should be mentioned: We just started a new secretarial career system, training is one of our big requirements to advance and quite a number of our secretaries do not want to take advantage of this training. The secretaries in private industry are not given this same opportunity. Most of the secretaries have to pay for any training they receive and go to night school. This was brought up time and again at this Speakout and especially how they need and want the training.

a. With our new pay system it was important that we add more to the positions in order to have them classified at a higher level. We call it "enhancing the position", they call it "restructuring".

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b. Job security is another factor that is different. Many secretaries in the private sector have no security and have much stress in regard to peer pressure of drugs with company co-workers and having to "be nice to the customer" at parties. They can also be fired at will.

Conclusions: We are fortunate to be where we are. We have job security; an abundance of training; the Agency is right on track with its implementation of the new pay system; and it's not always greener on the other side.

4. Secretary Speakout 1987 was well represented by the Agency with approximately 16 attending. It was a tremendous opportunity to meet and talk with secretaries in the private sector from all over the United States and compare Government with private industry and we think our Agency came out on top in these comparisons. The moderator, Ms. Adella C. LaRue, was impressed with the number of secretaries our Agency sent to the Speakout and would very much like to have some of us join. If anyone would like more information or have any questions, we would be happy to give them the information.

5. We would like to take this opportunity to thank our supervisors and the Office for allowing us the time away from our jobs for a very enlightening experience.

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Administrative Management
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Attachments:

- A. Consensus
- B. List of Attendees

cc: OC Soft File

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**Secretary
Speakout®'87**

**A Profession
in Motion**

April 20/22 / Atlanta / Westin Peachtree Plaza

CONSENSUS

Technology has changed the way secretaries manage information.

The profession now mandates:

INDIVIDUAL responsibility for identifying personal needs for education, training, and career development; recognizing physical and occupational hazards in the workplace, and actively participating with management to eliminate or alleviate such conditions.

EMPLOYER responsibility for providing training, developmental opportunities and financial assistance; communicating organizational goals and restructuring positions for competent secretaries to move up rather than out of the profession.

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION responsibility for monitoring trends and analyzing the state of the profession; for providing resources; establishing ethical and performance standards; designing strategies for recognition of the profession and certification programs.

The future demands that:

SECRETARIES demonstrate value-added performance and direct the future of the profession by defining competencies and networking with educators thereby influencing the education of future secretaries; mentoring students; establishing career paths; and providing a return on investment.

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REGISTRANTS AS OF APRIL 13, 1987

BADGE COLOR IDENTIFICATION

BLUE — PSI Members
YELLOW — Allied Associations
GREEN — Nonmember Secretary
GOLD — Nonmember Other
ORANGE — PSI Headquarters Staff
WHITE — Group Leaders

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